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ADDRESS OF THE HONORABLE RYAN RUSK, UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE, TO THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

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Mr. Chairman:

Three weeks ago today, I met with your Foreign Ministers to consider the serious, new situation created by the Soviet military build-up in Cuba. Most of you participated in that meeting. You will recall the discussion which took place culminating in a consensus on many important aspects of the problem expressed in the final communique. In that document the Foreign Ministers unanimously stated that the efforts of the Sino-Soviet bloc to convert the island of Cuba into an armed base for Communist penetration of the Americas was the most urgent problem confronting the Hemisphere. They also found that the organs of our regional system which have responsibilities to deal with the situation created by the Communist regime in Cuba, should intensify their efforts and should stand in readiness to consider what measures, beyond those already authorized, might be required. And the Foreign Ministers also observed that it was desirable to intensify surveillance of arms deliveries to Cuba in order to prevent the secret accumulation in the island of arms that can be used for offensive purposes against the Hemisphere.

When the Foreign Ministers prepared the communique, there was no indication that the arms build-up was taking on an offensive character. Today we have incontrovertible evidence that despite repeated warnings the Castro regime is permitting the establishment of medium and intermediate range missile bases on Cuban territory by the Soviet Union. The facts are clear and incontrovertible and were set forth by the President of the United States in his statement last evening. And these facts have been, of course, also conveyed to you by other means directly and to your Governments. These facts demonstrate that the USSR is making a major military investment in Cuba with advanced weapons systems with substantial offensive capability.

What do these facts mean to the independent nations of this Hemisphere? Their significance is immediate, direct and perhaps fateful to the maintenance of that independence. The principal implications are:

First:

The Communist regime in Cuba with the complicity of its Soviet mentors has deceived the Hemisphere under the cloak of secrecy and with loud protestations of arming for self-defense, in allowing an extracontinental power, bent on destruction of the national independence, and democratic aspirations of all our peoples, to establish an offensive military foothold in the heart of the Hemisphere. I will not go into a detailed history of this partnership in deceit. Sufficient to recall that President Dorticos in his

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speech before the United Nations General Assembly on October 8 said: "We shall continue to strengthen our military defense, to defend ourselves, not to attack anyone." The Soviet Government on its part said in an official statement on September 12: "The armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes." The statement added that Soviet rockets are so powerful that "there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." And last week the Soviet Foreign Minister in his talks with President Kennedy in the White House said that Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba," that "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive," and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would never become involved in rendering such assistance."

Second:

This offensive capability is of such a nature that it can reach into the far corners of our Hemisphere with its destructive force. These new weapons arriving in Cuba are not only directed against the United States. Let there be no misunderstanding. There are other strategic targets in this Hemisphere - in your countries - which they can devastate with their lethal loads. The missile sites in being for medium range ballistic are capable of carrying nuclear warheads as far west as Mexico City, as far south as the Panama Canal or Círacas, and as far north as Washington, D. C. The new sites for intermediate range ballistic missiles in Cuba will be able to carry mass destruction to most of the major cities in the Western Hemisphere. In the face of this rapid build-up, no country of this Hemisphere can feel secure, either from direct attack or from persistent blackmail.

Third:

This new Soviet intervention means a further tightening of the enslavement of the Cuban people by the Soviet power to which the Castro regime has surrendered the Cuban national heritage. It signifies for the rest of the Hemisphere a vast strengthening of the offensive capability of the Communist system which talks of peaceful coexistence by which it appears to mean softening for subjugation, which uses the slogan of national liberation to crush every legitimate national aspiration.

Fourth:

The Soviet intervention in this Hemisphere with major offensive weapons challenges as never before the determination of the American Governments to carry out Hemispheric commitments solemnly assumed in inter-American treaties and resolutions for the defense of the peace and security of the nations of this Hemisphere against extracontinental aggression or intervention. Here again, I hardly need to review them because they are familiar to us all. Beginning with the Rio Treaty in 1947, and culminating in the decisions of the Foreign Ministers in Punta del Este and in their communique issued here this month, there has been a mounting conviction on the part of the American peoples and their Governments, that the growing intervention of the International Communist movement in this Hemisphere must stop and that the

individual and collective means available within the regional system should be brought to bear as necessary to accomplish this objective.

The task before us is to meet this new phase of Soviet aggressive intervention in this Hemisphere. As free nations, we must act in defense of our national independence and democratic heritage. We must confront and overcome the challenge now presented in Cuba. In doing so, we must tailor our response, individually and collectively, to the degree and direction of the threat, be firm in our convictions, and resolute and united in our actions.

In these circumstances the United States Government has sought a policy which would accomplish our purposes with the appropriate and necessary use of force and with necessary opportunity to remove this grave threat by means other than general war.

The President has therefore stated that it is necessary immediately to prevent the arrival of additional offensive military weapons in Cuba, to seek promptly to arrest further work on the offensive capacity being developed in Cuba and to require that all these offensive weapons be withdrawn or eliminated before we can consider that this new threat to the peace of the Hemisphere will have been adequately dealt with.

The United States Government, therefore, strongly urges that the Governments of this Hemisphere take the actions necessary under the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance to achieve these objectives.

As an initial measure, which is primarily the responsibility of this Hemisphere and of special concern to it, the United States believes that we should establish a strict quarantine to prevent further offensive military equipment from reaching Cuba. The immediate character of the nuclear military threat to our peoples from these bases in Cuba is such that we cannot tolerate any further opportunity to add to their capacity. To this end, the United States has requested this urgent meeting of the Council to convoke the Organ of Consultation under Article 6 of the Rio Treaty to deal with this new situation. We are convinced that the evidence presented can leave no doubt that the danger is present and real. Furthermore, because of the urgency of the situation, we believe that the Council, acting provisionally as Organ of Consultation, should immediately take the steps which are necessary at this time.

For these purposes my Government has prepared two draft Resolutions, the texts of which have been circulated. The first is a procedural Resolution by which the Council would decide to convoke the Organ of Consultation under the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance and would also decide to act provisionally, as that Organ in accordance with Article 12 of that Treaty. The second, more substantive Resolution, is one which would be formally considered by the Council, once it has approved the first and has constituted itself as the Organ of Consultation. Under this second Resolution, the Organ of Consultation would call for the immediate dismantling and withdrawal from Cuba of all missiles and other weapons

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other weapons of offensive capability and would recommend, though not seek to compel, the member states of the OAS to take the measures necessary to ensure that this build-up does not continue to receive additional offensive weapons, to prevent the offensive capacity already acquired by the Castro regime from being used to destroy the peace and the security of the Hemisphere.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to say a word about the action being taken simultaneously in the Security Council of the United Nations. The threat is to our Hemisphere and we have the primary responsibility and duty to act as we are now doing as a Hemisphere. But the threat originates from outside the Hemisphere and it is appropriate that the extracontinental power which challenges our inter-American commitments and our deliberations must also be dealt with in that forum in which he participates. It is therefore fitting in this case that the Security Council of the United Nations be requested to call upon this Member to refrain from his aggressive actions against us and to seek to enforce upon him its decisions.

Meanwhile, without awaiting the outcome of the United Nations approach we must ensure that our Hemisphere is effectively quarantined against any further additions to Soviet offensive nuclear military power in our midst.

All the world will be watching how wisely, how resolutely, how unitedly this Council acts to meet a challenge within our Hemisphere and to our own interest. May I add that crucial in this present situation will be the judgment of others, some of them far away, about the unity and determination of the nations of this Hemisphere. The President made it clear last evening that we should prefer to resolve this problem through peace. But if others make a grave mistake the danger will be greatly increased. And therefore, gentlemen, I am deeply convinced that the unanimity of this Hemisphere is directly related to the opportunity to remove this threat within the limits of force which are now being employed. For the future of peace and freedom of the world has never before been so dependent upon the Inter-American System as it is today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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